

## **ABSTRACT**

**DISSERTATION/THESIS/RESEARCH PAPER/CREATIVE PROJECT:**  
Characteristics of Successfully Used Outdoor Classrooms in Indiana Communities

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**DATE:** December, 2009

**PAGES:** 35

This study identifies a broad range of outdoor classroom outdoor classroom characteristics that contribute to their successful implementation in school curriculum. The study identifies shared characteristics of successfully used outdoor classrooms throughout Indiana with an emphasis on public schools in suburban communities. Teachers and other outdoor classroom users were interviewed and surveyed to determine what the greatest influences were for their decision to use an outdoor classroom. Likewise, deterrents to the use of outdoor classrooms were determined. Survey participants were asked to rank their reasons for using the outdoor classrooms as well as the deterrents to outdoor classroom use. The study also used site visits to derive a list of outdoor classrooms' physical characteristics. The interviews, surveys, and site visits were used to gain insight into the historical development, current management, and diverse uses of outdoor classrooms in Indiana communities. Based on the data collected in this study, a concise list of recommendations for teachers and those seeking to develop or improve an outdoor classroom are provided.